



## Press Clipping Article

**Title:** Cabbage Inc. contracting in area - Firm taking over former co-op facilities

**Date:** 01/15/2007

**Source:** [Messenger-Inquirer \(Owensboro\)](#)

**Writer:** James Mayse

**Lead:**

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The general manager of the company taking over the former West Kentucky Growers Cooperative facility said Friday that Kentucky vegetable farmers will eventually play an important role in the company's operations.

Cabbage Inc. of Cleveland is leasing the cooperative facility in western Daviess County from the state Agricultural Development Board. The board took possession of the facility after the vegetable cooperative folded at the beginning of 2006.

Cabbage Inc. will lease the facility for three years and will have the option to buy it after the lease is complete. Randy Marcum, general manager of Cabbage Inc., said the company is recruiting area growers for contract vegetable production this spring. The company is also leasing the former Central Kentucky Growers Association in Georgetown.

"We don't really have anything planned for 2007 (at the Georgetown facility) because it's getting so close to marketing season," Marcum said. " ... We may be able to put something together for the fall."

The company took Owensboro-area farmers to Florida this week to meet with company contract growers and is planning to send local growers to Texas to see the company's operation there.

"Our goal is to get them to visit with our growers in Texas without us there and ask them questions and get some candid answers," Marcum said.

Cabbage Inc. attempts to grow vegetables in two or three regions at once, to keep produce available year-round.

In the past, when Kentucky had several small vegetable cooperatives, they often had produce at the same time -- and ended up competing against one another, Marcum said. "Those guys needed to be talking together," he said.

When the West Kentucky Growers Cooperative was in operation, it's most successful crop was sweet corn, Marcum said. "They had no competition," he said. But West Kentucky had to compete with other state cooperatives to sell its bell pepper crop.

"It was a buyer's world" with peppers, Marcum said. " ... They could buy it for whatever they wanted to pay for it."

By adding Kentucky growers, Cabbage Inc. can extend the time vegetables are available to its clients, Marcum said. The company plans to start small in Kentucky and build its grower base annually, he said.

"We want to get a few growers who (are) good growers to start with. We expect to increase the volume each year to make this thing work," Marcum said. The company deals with more than cabbage, Marcum said.

Company officials are impressed with the Daviess County cooperative facility, Marcum said.

"This facility, we'd like for it to be a showcase for Kentucky," he said.

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